

which reimburses teachers for up to \$250 of out-of-pocket classroom expenses. It's an important signal that we care about our teachers. It's a proper use of Federal legislation.

We also passed a good piece of legislation that expanded loan forgiveness from \$5,000 to \$17,500 for talented math, science, and special ed teachers who teach at low-income schools. I thought that was a good piece of legislation. Unfortunately, it's about to expire. So I would hope the Congress—we can work with the Congress to make loan forgiveness permanent. It sends the right signals to our teachers and helps school districts that are looking for good teachers to attract those teachers.

And finally, I believe the Federal Government can put a program together to help reward success for our teachers. I proposed a new \$500 million incentive fund to reward teachers who get results. Teachers could qualify for an award by raising student performance or closing the achievement gap or volunteering to teach in low-income schools. That will be up to the local districts, to decide how to disburse the money. But I think it makes sense to encourage excellence by providing a \$5,000 bonus to nearly 100,000 outstanding teachers across the country. The program won't be administered at the Federal level. It will be administered at the State and local level. But it's a way to help say to teachers, "Thanks for a job well done. Here's a little extra because of merit. Here's our way of saying thanks for doing what you want to do, which is provide excellence."

And so here's some practical ideas for the Congress to consider as we head into a new session, to make sure that the good folks of this country understand that we're committed to education reform at all levels. We're making great progress because of the No Child Left Behind Act. I will vigorously defend the No Child Left Behind Act. We will not accept rolling back the accountability systems in the No Child Left Behind Act, because I believe the accountability systems are beginning to make a huge difference in the lives of children from all walks of life across this country.

Here's some ideas to help ninth graders when they're coming into high school, so we can assess their problems and meet their

needs before they lose hope, so the 68 percent graduation number soars. Here's a way to help reward teachers. Here's a way to provide good incentives. Here's a way to make sure that we achieve what we all want, the best school system in the world.

Thank you for letting me come by to visit. May God bless you all. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:31 a.m. in the school's main gymnasium.

Proclamation 7861—National Mentoring Month, 2005

January 12, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

All Americans are grateful for the special people who played a positive role in their childhood. Whether a relative, teacher, coach, or community leader, a dedicated mentor can profoundly change a young person's life. During National Mentoring Month, we recognize the role models who have influenced lives, and we continue to support programs that help the young people of America.

Mentoring programs pair a child in need with a caring adult who can help that child understand the importance of making the right choices in life. It is one of the best ways to send young people the right messages. Through friendship and encouragement, mentors can help prepare young Americans for a hopeful future.

My Administration has supported mentoring programs for young people at risk. In August 2004, my Administration made available over \$45 million in grants to help provide mentors for children with parents in prison. In addition, my Administration provided \$48 million in school-based grants in 2004 to provide at-risk youth with mentors to assist them in the successful transition from elementary to secondary school.

One mentor can change a life forever. I encourage all of our citizens to dedicate their time and talents to mentoring a young person. By providing help and hope to our

youth, mentors help foster a more compassionate society that values every life and leaves no child behind.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 2005 as National Mentoring Month. I call upon the people of the United States to recognize the importance of mentoring, to look for opportunities to serve as mentors in their communities, and to celebrate this month with appropriate activities and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 14, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 18.

Remarks to Reporters Following Briefings in Arlington, Virginia

January 13, 2005

Global War on Terrorism and Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunamis Disaster Relief

The President. Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for the briefing that we just had. The Secretary arranged for a briefing from Admiral Fargo and our commanders on the ground who are providing organization and handling the relief effort for the victims of the tsunamis. I got to tell you, our military is making a significant difference in providing relief and aid and help and compassion for those who have suffered. I am very impressed, Mr. Secretary, by how quickly we have responded and the assets that you have ordered deployed to help these people. And there's a lot of talk about how some in the world don't appreciate America. Well, I can assure you that those who have been helped by our military appreciate America.

We also talked about the war on terror. We're constantly reviewing our strategy as to

how to defeat the enemy—fully recognize that the war on terror will require a coordinated effort within our own Government as well as a coordinated effort with the countries around the world which understand the stakes of this war. I am pleased with the response from around the world, appreciate so many nations understanding that we must work together to defeat these killers. I'm mindful of the fact that we have—constantly have got to review our plans and never lose our will.

So, Mr. Secretary, thanks for the briefing. It was a very good briefing, and you're doing a fine job on behalf of the American people.

Secretary Rumsfeld. Thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:21 a.m. at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Thomas B. Fargo, USN, commander, U.S. Pacific Command.

Executive Order 13370—Providing an Order of Succession in the Office of Management and Budget

January 13, 2005

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America and pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, it is hereby ordered that:

Section 1. During any period when the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (Director) and the Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget (Deputy Director) have died, resigned, or otherwise become unable to perform the functions and duties of the office of Director, the following officers of the Office of Management and Budget, in the order listed, shall perform the functions and duties of the office of Director, if they are eligible to act as Director under the provisions of the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, until such time as at least one of the officers mentioned above is able to perform the functions and duties of the office of Director:

Deputy Director for Management;

Executive Associate Director;

Associate Director (National Security Programs);